

# LIBRETTO

Symphony Village's Newsletter

December, 2006

Vol.I No.12

*MISSION STATEMENT: To enhance the quality of life and promote a harmonious community through the timely publication of accurate information about residents, events, and activities in and around Symphony Village.*



*HAPPY HOLIDAYS TO  
ALL SYMPHONY VILLAGE  
RESIDENTS*



WELCOME NEW HOMEOWNERS!!



The following residents settled and/or moved into their new homes since our last publication:

Thomas and Virginia Taylor  
339 Overture Way  
443-262-8021  
[thomas.f.taylor@atlanticbb.net](mailto:thomas.f.taylor@atlanticbb.net)

Linda Blume  
224 Orchestra Place

Charles and Rose Puls  
202 Encore Court

Elizabeth Watson  
811 Harmony Way

Ellen Norman  
210 Orchestra Place

Dennis and Linda Gardner  
807 Harmony Way

Marvin and Katherine Stursa  
271 Overture Way

Joseph and Lenora Davis  
409 Symphony Way

Amy Holm  
306 Opera Court

Welcome to each and everyone!

NB: Some of our new residents were not available to complete the application for the Directory but the information will be updated as soon as possible and will be available on the Web site.

New Residents, mark your calendar for January 17, 2007 for a get-to-gether to meet other new neighbors and for information sharing.

ANNUAL MEETING  
HUNTER'S OAK, DECEMBER 6, 2006

Approximately 200 residents attended the annual meeting, which was called to order by Tara Laing of Legum and Norman shortly after 5:00 p.m.

Kevin Sullivan announced that the HOA Board of Directors had expanded from the original three members to five members, as required by the governing documents. Members of the Board are Jeff Caruso, Bob Karen, Kevin Sullivan, Rosemary Davis, and Jon Bullock. The Board has appointed Officers who, as a group, will function much in the way the Symphony Village Advisory Board (SVAB) and its SVBCC predecessor have functioned for the past two years. Those officers are Jon Bullock, Rosemary Davis, and Brian Creighton who are employed by the developer, and Jack Detrick and Arlyn Marshall who are residents of Symphony Village. Their purpose is to keep HOA business out of conflict with developer business. This is the first time residents of Symphony Village have had a voting voice in the direction of the community. As the months progress to a (now projected February 2008) resident majority, additional resident officers will be appointed. By the time our community is our own, it is anticipated that the majority of officers will be SV residents.

All committees will be appointed by the Officers. In this connection, committee chairs are asked to submit their new 2007 committee rosters to the Officers for re-appointment. In addition, anyone who wishes to serve on a committee who has not yet had the opportunity to volunteer is encouraged to do so.

The first order of business for the Officers will be to publish the Facilities Rules that emerged from the recent resident survey. The goal of that survey was to make rules based on actual feedback from the community. In the interim, the indoor pool is open to resident-accompanied guests ages 3-adult every day between the hours of noon and 4:00 p.m. All children using the indoor pool must be toilet trained. In addition, the whirlpool is open to resident accompanied guests 19 years of age and older during the same hours. For health and safety reasons, no children under the age of 19 are permitted in the whirlpool at any time. Residents can expect the new Facilities Rules to be published and in place before the end of the year.

The budget for 2007 is \$684,425.00. Several residents expressed concern that the budget was not mailed to residents in advance of the meeting so they could review it and speak intelligently to it at the meeting. Others suggested at a minimum, it could have been made available at the meeting. Tara Laing assured the group that the budget will be out the week of December 11<sup>th</sup>, along with coupon books reflecting a 10% fee increase to \$207.00. Tara explained that a 10% increase is the maximum allowed by HOA law and that it is necessary to make those incremental increases now so the community will remain solvent in the face of rising costs during the coming years. The developer does not pay HOA dues on unsold lots, but does make substantial contributions to the operating budget. The developer contribution for 2007 is \$61,000. Anyone wishing to review the Balance Sheet and the Profit and Loss Statement may do so in the Clubhouse by appointment with SV General Manager, Dennis Sesplankis. Dennis spoke briefly about his role as General Manager. Working together, he and Jan VanRyper will provide 11 hours per day of on site service from 8 a.m. until 7 p.m. Monday through Friday. In addition, Jan will be on-site at least two weekends a month from 8 a.m. until 4 p.m. Dennis will oversee all aspects of the community and the Clubhouse. He will receive requests for modification and route them through the Architectural

Committee and the Board for action. He expects to provide responses to resident requests in 30 days or less. In addition, he will be available to address resident questions and concerns, process invoices, and sign checks for budgeted items. In conclusion, he said, "I am at your service."

Jon Bullock reminded us that snow plowing begins within two hours of two inches of snowfall. Residents who want their driveway plowed will need to have their cars off the driveway. Paving of Taylor Mill Road is complete, so there should be no construction traffic driving through the community. Responding to a resident's concern, Jon will address the speed of construction vehicles in the areas where they do travel. The SV defibrillator was shipped on December 6. The Officers will address placement, access, and training. In order to comply with stringent Maryland EPA regulations, runoff and standing water issues will be addressed as construction in each phase is completed. In the interim, Denison should be contacted to check grading in specific areas, some of which may require drains.

Caruso has hired Align to conduct post-settlement surveys. Three surveys will be sent to new residents during the course of their first year of residency. Kevin urges everyone who receives one to complete it. Symphony Village is the largest project Caruso has ever developed, so the feedback is very important.

### **FROM JAN'S DESK**

I'd like to wish you all a "HAPPY HOLIDAY" and invite you to join me for "Dessert with Jan" on Friday, December 22, at 7:00 p.m. in the Grand Concert Hall. Just bring yourself---nothing else required. I'm looking forward to an exciting New Year. Beginning January 3<sup>rd</sup>, my new hours will be as follows: January 3, 4, and 5 – 11 a.m. to 7 p.m., 6 and 7 – 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. 8 through the 12 – 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. I will be off January 13, 14, 15, and 16. My schedule will have me here every other weekend unless there is a meeting or function.

### **PAST SOCIAL EVENTS**

The Clubhouse is alive with the Spirit of the Holidays! The smell of the evergreen, the beauty of the center pieces on the tables, the wall decorations, the Menorah and the poinsettias bring *Glad Tidings* to all. Thank you to the residents, and Jan, who participated in the evening of decorating. Your hard work is appreciated by all of us. Take a look at the pictures in the Clubhouse Photo Album!



### **Symphony Village Singles**

On Thursday December 7, we went to the Killarney Restaurant in Davidsonville to enjoy their Irish food, which includes fish and chips, seafood pie and corn beef and cabbage. After this delicious lunch, we had a tour of the Christmas displays at Homestead Gardens and shopped their wonderful selection of Christmas decorations. Coffee was available and we sat and watched their fascinating model trains. Everyone enjoyed the day. Next month we will meet on January 10 at 11:30 a.m. in the Clubhouse parking lot to go for lunch. A restaurant has not been selected. Please watch the calendar for further information.

**Christmas Party 2006**



The SV Christmas Party on Saturday, December 9, was a gala affair from start to finish. We were greeted at the door by our own carolers, an elf, a gingerbread man, a snowman and St. Nick. Occasions Catering provided an endless supply of great food, and the dance floor was always overflowing. The V.O. Duo stayed an extra hour, so we could dance on into the night. It was a really special party and a wonderful way to begin the holiday season. Many thanks to Caruso Homes for providing us with such a special event.



**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

LIFE STYLES COMMITTEE: by Linda Farrar

**New Year's Eve**



Ring in 2007 at the third annual Symphony Village New Year's Eve Party on December 31<sup>st</sup> from 8:00 p.m. until! The dance floor will be put to use, all of our favorite music will be playing, and there will be plenty of food. This event will be by ticket only. Tickets are \$15.00 per person and drinks will be BYOB or from the honor bar. If you have signed up but have not yet paid, please do so immediately. Jan will have the tickets. This event is limited to Symphony Village residents only with the exception of our single residents who may buy a ticket for one guest, as well. We will need help setting up, serving, and cleaning up, so please sign up to help. See you at our gala party.

As you know, the New Year's Eve Party is the last event for which the current Lifestyles Committee will be responsible. We would like to thank all of you who helped us this past year. We encourage everyone to help the new committee with their upcoming events.

**January Activities:**

- Happy Hours – 5th and 20th
- Game Night – 12th
- Movie Night – 26th

**Book Clubs**



One Book Club meets the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of every month. All are welcome to read the book and come for discussion. The following are the selections for the next few months.

<u>Month</u>	<u>Book</u>	<u>Author</u>
December	<i>Marley and Me</i>	John Grogan
January	<i>Rewrites, A Memoir</i>	Neil Simon
February	<i>The Glass Castle</i>	Jeannette Walls

## The Reading For Fun Book Club

The second Book Club meets the *3rd Tuesday of every month*.

Our November meeting was hosted by Isabel Cusimano, who provided a delicious pound cake for dessert. Her selection, *The Lincoln Lawyer*, had nothing to do with Abe Lincoln, but featured a lawyer whose office was in a Lincoln Town Car. It had some fancy twists, but most agreed it was an easy read. In spite of the busy Christmas season, we decided to go ahead with a December 19 meeting, hosted by Joann Milczakowski. Her selection is a Debbie Macomber book entitled *Changing Habits*, which is about three former nuns. Call Jack Hennessey (758-4872) if you need to borrow a copy or you are interested in joining.

Each month, one person volunteers to be the host. The host provides light refreshments and selects the book for that month. Come out and join the fun! All villagers are invited. Contacts are Jack Hennessey or Pat Kindle.

## **Dining Inn at Symphony Village**



Dining Inn at Symphony group will hold its third dinner on January 27th at 6:00 p.m. Anyone who would like to participate in this wonderful dining experience should sign up at the clubhouse and indicate whether you would prefer to be a guest or a host. The host home will have 6 people assigned to them (couples or singles) and they will bring the side dishes while the host will provide the main course. It is an easy way to entertain and a wonderful opportunity to get acquainted with your neighbors in a more intimate setting. The past two dinners have been lots of fun and the food has been delicious. It is a lovely night out and you don't have to leave the community. The cut off date for signing up to participate will be January 15. Give this group a try--you will find it lots of fun!

## **The Gazebo Garden Group**

Well, the frost is here, but we planted our bulbs just in time. The group planted 1600 bulbs before the frost hit. Next spring we will see the results of our efforts. First, we will see the crocuses, soon to be followed by daffodils, jonquils, and tulips. Each and we will be planting perennials and annuals can enjoy the 96 pansies donated by Dennison spring, depending on the weather. Thank you to hardly move for days! We welcome all



of the 20 beds has an anchor plant, in the spring. In the meantime you which will bloom through the the "planters." Some of us could residents to join us next spring in planting the annuals and some perennials, and we certainly appreciate contributions anytime.

## **SYMPHONY SNEAKERS UPDATE**

Sneakers has been very busy since the last update. As you all know, our Silent Auction was a great success and over \$7800 was raised after expenses. Thanks again to all who helped and were so generous before, during, and after that night.

All of the items were selected from our Santa Tree and by the time you receive this we will have everything ready to distribute to our families.



The mornings of November 29-30 saw some of us at Kennard Elementary at 7:30 a.m. helping with Donuts For Dads. Over 150 dads accompanied their children for the free book giveaway and reading time. We hope you saw the articles and pictures in *The Record Observer* and *Star Democrat*.

We have distributed 11 winter jackets to the children in the families we have “adopted.” We have also started our fuel assistance for the year.

On December 7, a group met at Kennard Elementary to help separate and package candles. This is the fund raiser sponsored by the PTA to help fund the book giveaways.

### **Upcoming Events**

December 20 - Help sort canned goods collected by the students and Adopt-A-Bear presents delivered to Kennard elementary. We need lots of help. Please call Linda Farrar (410-758-8744) if you are available to help.

December 21 – Our second annual Christmas all-school book giveaway will be held at Kennard Elementary. We need volunteers to help for 1-2 hours each from 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Please call Linda Farrar (410-758-8744) if you can help.

### **Mentor Needed**

Centreville Elementary needs a male mentor for a young boy. You are asked to serve for 30 minutes to an hour each week to provide a positive male influence in this child’s life. Call Linda Farrar (410-758-8744) if you are interested. Also, let us know if you would be able to help with future calls for mentors from either Centreville Elementary or Kennard Elementary.

### **Next Sneakers Meeting**

Our next Sneakers meeting will be Thursday, January 11, 2007, at 7:00 p.m. All residents are welcome and encouraged to participate.

### **OUTREACH PROGRAM UPDATE: by Dorothy Hamm**

Shopping bags loaded with mittens, scarves, hats, candy, toys and cash have been delivered to the Department of Social Services for the **QAC Council for Youth and Children’s Christmas Party** for disadvantaged families. We are grateful to all who were so generous and no doubt the receiving families will be as well. There is nothing quite as heart warming as sharing the Holiday spirit with others less fortunate.



Plans are in the works for our second annual **HOUSE TOUR** on Saturday, April 28, 2007.

It is the House Tour which makes most of our charitable donations and activities financially possible. Last year's House Tour was a huge success, and we had a wonderful time working together on it. With all the experience we have acquired, the expectation is for an even better House Tour in 2007. We are looking for residents who are willing to show their houses, especially Vivaldi, Bach and Gershwin models. Joyce Ryan is the Chairperson and is currently organizing the various committees. If you would like to show your house or join in the planning, please give Joyce a call at 410-758-2136 or Beth Dewhirst at 410-758-0944



What crazy weather and weather reporting we have on the Eastern Shore! The U.S. Weather Report on Dec. 1<sup>st</sup> announced a 70% chance of rain with thunder storms and wind gusts up to 35 miles per hour. This weather report continued through the day. It was first reported that the **Christmas Parade** had been cancelled and then later in the afternoon it was rescheduled. The general consensus was that we did not want to take the risk of someone on the float either getting wet and cold or hurt with the high winds. Therefore, we made the decision not to participate along with 34 other organizations that also did not participate. I'm sure everyone was disappointed, but we are now already prepared for the Centreville Christmas Parade 2007. Thanks to everyone for all their efforts and high spirits.

The SVAB asked the Outreach Committee to assist the newly formed Symphony Village Emergency Medical Service Committee in their effort to improve the EMS service in our community. The EMS committee is working with the Goodwill Fire Department, who asked for help with their fundraising. We will review the many options before any action will be taken. If anyone has expertise in fund raising or a desire to assist in this effort, please call Dorothy Hamm (410-758-3803).

Please join us for our next meeting on Tuesday, January 9, at 7:00 p.m. in the Club House.

### **ONE MORE ITEM**

The Symphony Village Advisory Board has purchased a "Memorial Book," to be kept at the Clubhouse, to honor and remember all those residents who have passed on. It is a beautiful leather-bound 14" x14" album. Each page will represent a family member and will include items that the family and board deem appropriate, focusing on accomplishments and life values. We hope to have this book available for display in February. For further information, contact Helen Schultz at 443-262-9181 or at [grandma@schultz.org](mailto:grandma@schultz.org).

### **Neighbor to Neighbor Update**

The next meeting for Neighbor to Neighbor will be Tuesday, January 7, 2007, at 7:00 p.m. in the Symphony Room of the Clubhouse. All are invited to attend.

We are in need of a Secretary to take the minutes of our meetings. If you are interested, please call Pat Loiacono at 410-758-8170. Our meetings are usually held every other month.

**NEEDED** - Volunteers to make a meal for our residents when they are ill and/or recovering from illness. If you can help, please call one of the following:

Karen King.....443-262-9450 (Sonata, Symphony and Encore)  
Helena Joy.....410-758-6532 (Harmony, Concerto, Opera and Orchestra)  
Doris Eck ....410 758-0332 (Overture)

If everyone signs up for one meal, we can provide this community with a high level of loving care.

Residents willing to drive a fellow resident to a medical appointment or for treatment should contact Marlene Tennier at 410-758-4743.

Please remember that if you have medical equipment that you are willing to share, please register the equipment with Betty Moulis at 410-758-4902.

Neighbor to Neighbor is the internal part of our Outreach Program, and our goal is to assist one another in times of surgery, hospitalization, treatment, and bereavement. Please join with us and share your ideas and talents at the next meeting on January 7, 2007.

## QAC Adult Day Care

Helen Schultz, a resident of Symphony Village, has been appointed a Member-at-Large on the Board of Queen Anne's County Day Care, Inc. She will be a liaison between this group and Symphony Village. Helen is asking SV residents to consider participating in the Food Lion Shop and Share Program that will benefit the QAC Adult Day Care. Please complete an application at Food Lion for an MVP card and then follow these directions to register for Food Lion's Shop and Share Program to benefit QAC Adult Day Care:

- Log on to Foodlion.com
- Under "In the Community" click "Lion Shop and Share"
- Click "Register MVP Card"
- Click "Select Organization"
- A pop-up box "Find Your Organization" will appear:
  1. Enter MD, and Stevensville and you will get the list of charities.
  2. Highlight "QAC Adult Day Care, Inc." and "OK"
- You will automatically go back to the Register screen.
- Click "Add MVP cards" and enter your information

By using your registered MVP card at Food Lion, Adult Day Care is eligible to receive up to \$350 per calendar quarter. Your purchases at any Food Lion in any state are registered. Thanks for your support!

## **'TIS THE FOUR-LETTER WORD SEASON**

submitted by Jon Briggs

It's that time of year when one begins to hear that four-letter word that sends shivers through our bodies. You guessed it - we're talking about the SNOW word.



When you have snow and ice, there's usually a need to shovel sidewalks and driveways. Fortunately, Caruso is currently taking care of this "winter worry" by hiring Denison to remove the snow and apply deicers on individual walkways, driveways, and common sidewalks when needed. Since some deicers have a propensity to damage concrete surfaces, metals and plants, Denison uses a magnesium chloride deicer that minimizes the chances of such damage. Denison used magnesium chloride as a deicer last year in Symphony Village and will use it again this year, if that four-letter word should drift our way.



The most common deicers consist of either sodium chloride (rock salt, halite), calcium chloride, magnesium chloride, or a combination thereof. Several of these chemicals (sodium chloride, calcium chloride) can have a propensity to damage concrete, creating a condition known as spalling. They can also be harmful to vegetation or to metal. Aside from the type of deicer utilized, the age, compression strength, and air entrainment of the concrete, as well as the number of freeze/thaw cycles that occur after the deicer is applied, all play a major role in determining if a deicer will damage the concrete. In addition, incorrect application of the product e.g., using too much of the product and/or failing to remove the melted snow once it turns to slush, can also result in damage to the concrete surfaces.

Why should we, as homeowners, be interested in deicers, especially since Denison takes care of snow removal? Well, obviously, the cost of snow removal and the application of deicing agents (if required) is a big part of our yearly budget. In addition to the expense associated with snow removal and deicing, there could be additional future costs to either the homeowner or to our homeowners' association, if a deicer is applied which subsequently damages our walkways, sidewalks, driveways, or plants.

If homeowners decide they want to apply deicer on their own, they should make sure they read and follow the directions carefully before applying the product. In most cases, you'll find that the manufacturer warns against applying a deicer to brick, slate and stone surfaces.

Right now, stores are gearing up in preparation for that four letter word. One store that will be stocking a magnesium chloride based deicer - the same chemicals use by Denison - is Price and Gannon True Value, located in our nearby shopping center.

Keep in mind that there are alternatives to using a deicer if increased traction (and not melting) is the desired result. Sand, gravel, and kitty litter (non-clumping) are often cited as being useful for such a purpose.

From both a safety and financial basis, here's hoping that the flaky four-letter word isn't heard too often in the next four months!

### **ADVERTISING IN THE LIBRETTO!**

The Publication and Communication Committee with approval from the SVAB is adding a page (s) to the newsletter for ads from Symphony Village residents and nonresidents.

Starting with the January issue of Libretto you can place an ad on a business card size with your name and business endeavor printed on it. The business card must be scanner ready.

Both monthly and extended contracts will be available. The price per unit (approximately 2"x 3.75" to accommodate most business size cards) is as follows:

\$20.00/ month for residents of Symphony Village

\$25.00/ month for nonresidents

Please note this would be for a one time ad in the Libretto

A 3 month contract: \$50.00 for residents  
\$65.00 for nonresidents

A 6 month contract: \$85.00 for residents  
\$115.00 for nonresidents

A 1 year contract: \$150.00 for residents  
\$200.00 for nonresidents

Space for larger ads may be available in the future. For more information or to place an ad in the January issue of the Libretto call Ann Walsh- 443-262-9449 or e-mail: [dawrn423@aol.com](mailto:dawrn423@aol.com)  
Please encourage local businesses to advertise in our newsletter.

*ADVERTISE  
IN THE  
LIBRETTO!*

### **FROM THE KITCHEN OF....**

Joan Hennessey

### **PUMPKIN DESSERT**

#### **Bottom Layer:**

1 box Duncan Hines yellow cake mix (not the mix with pudding).

Reserve and set aside 1 cup.

½ cup melted butter.

Reserve and set aside 2 Tbs.

1 egg.

Mix and spread in bottom of 9 x 13" pan.



#### **Center Layer:**

1 can (approx 14 oz) pumpkin

3 eggs

2/3 cup milk

¾ cup sugar

1 tsp cinnamon

Mix and spread over bottom layer.

#### **Topping:**

1 cup cake mix

2 tbs butter

1 tsp cinnamon

½ cup sugar

½ cup nuts (walnuts or pecans)

Mix and crumble on top. Bake at 350  
(325 for glass pan) for 50 minutes

## FEATURE ARTICLE OF THE MONTH

Getting Acquainted With Dennis Sesplankis

by  
Valerie Siegel

Bright sunlight streamed in through the open window of the Clubhouse office on a chilly December afternoon. Symphony Village On-site Manager, Dennis Sesplankis, looked up from his desk and greeted me with a warm, welcoming smile. I settled into a chair opposite him and we began to talk.

Born 56 years ago in Baltimore, Dennis notes he is age-qualified to live here, but he wasn't three years ago when he moved to Chestertown with Robin, his wife of 35 years. They have two adult children. Their daughter lives in Chestertown with two of the three grandchildren. Their son and his family are in New Brunswick, Canada. There was a story behind how the Canadian branch of the family came to be that Dennis and I would talk about a little later.

A graduate of the University of Baltimore, Dennis has been in community/property management all of his working life. His first job out of college in 1969 was with St. Martin's Home for the Aged in Catonsville. As Human Relations Director, he was required to work in every aspect of resident care. Working in the wards and getting to know the patients was such a meaningful experience for him that he describes it as his favorite job of all time.

Dennis still enjoys face-to-face contact with the people in the community he serves. It is, in fact, the part of his job he likes the most. As a portfolio manager with Brodie Management in Annapolis, Dennis oversaw eight properties and three marinas giving him less time to interact with residents than he would have liked. Here at Symphony Village, he looks forward to more resident contact. In addition, he is excited about assisting with the transition to resident ownership and control. In this regard, he is a skilled numbers cruncher, has excellent contacts, and has already begun to see the influx of good contractors and service providers onto the Eastern Shore.

Dennis brings with him a very personal experience with transition, risk-taking, and success. After traveling often to Maine and New Brunswick, Dennis and Robin decided to move the family there. They bought a lodge and restaurant on Grand Manan Island in the Bay of Fundy off the coast of Maine. They ran the business together for seven years before selling it to return home to Maryland. It was during those years that their son met his Canadian wife and settled with her in New Brunswick to raise their family.

Working at Symphony Village has restored a quality to Dennis's life that was lost in the 65-hour weeks and the long commutes of portfolio management. He looks forward to a long and convivial association with our community. You will find Dennis in the Clubhouse weekdays between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. Please stop by and say hello!